

Clear favourites to win the league title

by Ralph Badham

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 2 WYCOMBE WANDERERS 0

BISHOP'S Stortford became clear favourites to win the Rothmans Isthmian League when they beat the current leaders Wycombe Wanderers in front of 3,000 fans at the George Wilson Stadium on Tuesday.

Stortford still remain in second place in the table but with five matches left to play could finish with a maximum of 93 points, three more than Wycombe, who have three games left.

It now means that the Blues could afford to draw two matches and still be clear champions and even if they do lose one of their remaining matches they have, at this stage, a slightly better goal average than Wycombe.

However, both sides have some tough matches remaining and if the two leaders do slip up Hendon have still got an outside chance of the title.

Stortford wiped off one of their remaining matches last night (Thursday) when they played Leytonstone, who were sixth in the table. Next Tuesday the Blues are at home to Hitchin and then on the Thursday travel to Hendon for what could well be the championship decider.

Strong

Two days later the Blues are at home to Woking, who are in fifth place and their final match will be away to Walton and Hersham.

Wycombe's last three matches are away to Walton and Hersham next Monday, away to Leytonstone on the Wednesday and at home to Leytonstone on the Saturday.

Stortford put themselves into such a strong position with two first-half goals which knocked the heart out of Wycombe.

The Blues marched on to their 32nd match without defeat despite a threat from referee Mr D. Smith to abandon the game because of children behind the Thorley end goal throwing toilet "rolls on the pitch."

Ray Coombes emphasised Stortford's determination when he sent in a rocket of a shot from 35 yards which almost deceived goalkeeper Maskell.

After 18 minutes John Dear sent over a corner and Tony Bass found acres of room in the penalty area to head into the back of the net.

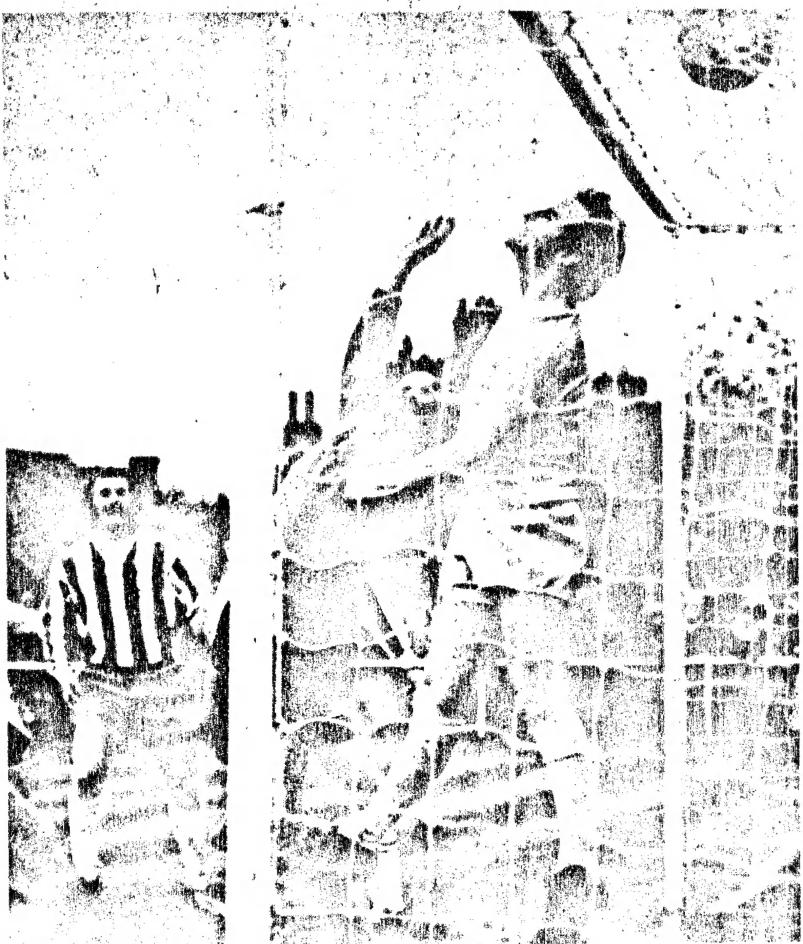
Cleared

Dear had a header cleared off the line before Stortford scored their second a minute before half time. Peter Leakey's free kick was headed on by Bass and Dear was at the far post to nod it in.

After the interval, the Blues had to soak up some heavy pressure but goalkeeper Terry Moore was in brilliant form. Stortford weathered the storm and with 10 minutes left Tony Bass had the chance to make it three but took too long over his shot.

Bishop's Stortford: T. Moore; T. Gibson, R. Coombes, D. Lawrence, J. Still, J. Payne, P. Leakey, J. Dear, T. Bass, M. Smith, P. Scott. Sub., P. Webb.

Wycombe Wanderers: J. Maskell; P. Burdseys, R. Grant, K. Mead, D. Bullock, T. Reardon, A. Horne, L. Prichard, N. Scarle, M. Hollifield, S. Perrin. Sub., P. Wood.



John Dear nods Stortford's second goal with the goalkeeper well beaten.